

[O'Brien]

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Saul Levitt

ADDRESS 27 Hamilton Terrace

DATE April 5

SUBJECT Maritime

1. Date and time of interview

April 3

2. Place of interview

Panama-Pacific Restaurant, 21st Street and 11th Avenue

3. Name and address of informant

Forty Fathoms, 25 South Street, N.Y.C.

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.

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X

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

X

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Ordinary coffee pot style with however the addition of a barroom through an entranceway.

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

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NAME OF WORKER Saul Levitt

ADDRESS 27 Hamilton Terrace

DATE April 5

SUBJECT Maritime

FEUD

I drove this bloody English mate to the other side of the world. This was on the old Canadian Constructors shipping between Montreal, Liverpool and Antwerp. It could have never happened today seein' that there are unions today. I am supposed to report at two o'clock and I got a bit on and didn't come on until four-thirty. When I got an board

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there was the mate, Mr. Noble, waitin' for me. Do you know what time it is, he says. It's four-thirty o'clock, I says. And what time were you told to report, says this bloody English sailor. Two o'clock, I says. Why, you can get your stuff out of here and go ashore. Am I to understand that I'm through, I says. That's so, he said. Why, seein' that I'm no longer an employee o' this ship an' free to do as I please I am going down to see the captain. Out of my way! I go down to the captain's cabin and I said to him, captain somebody else is running this ship. Who's that, said Mr. Webb, the captain, who was a mighty cultured man and a gentleman. It's your mate, I says, who has just told me to go ashore. Now! Hearin' that, the captain presses the button you know and calls the mate down. Mr. Noble, he says, is it correct that you have told Mr. Campbell here to go ashore? Hearin' that the mate 2 turned white and was fit to die. [?] two an' a 'arf hours late comin' abroad, says this Cockney just like that with all the stinkin' Limey showin' in his face. Go on aft, says the captain to me and you, Mr. Noble, remember that I'm running this ship. I had a bit on and the captain was a little sharp but i remembered that he'd saved me job for me. Ah, I said nothin' to him an' I forgave him for addressin' me in that sharp tone of voice. Goin' out the mate says to me, I'll make it hell for you. I went down to me bunk an' there was someone sleeping whom I awoke damn quick! Are ye married or single I says to him, because if yer married with a family full of children you can keep this job but otherwise you can just pack an' go ashore. Ah, he was single, and so I had the job. What can a first mate do aboard a ship? Why, he can make it so bad for you, it would seem a pleasure to go over the side. He was a regular martinent and a sonofabitch — I'm tellin' [you ?]. He made my life a hell. In Liverpool harbor I was painting the sides of her and something was coming down near me enough to kill me if it ever struck. After, while unloading I was working the slings and I noticed that a lot of good planking was going ashore that was not consigned. Haah! It looked suspicious to me and who do I see on the bridge supervisin' but the mate. I had him then by God but he didn't know it. On the first day coming back I knocked on the door of his cabin and I say it's me, Mr. Noble, and I'd like to talk to you. I 'aven't a thing to say to you, he says. Why, I says, standing in his cabin, Mr. Noble, did you notice that planking that was put ashore at Liverpool? With that he was ready to go through the floor.

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You never saw anything like it in your life. He must have been indulgin' in this 3 crooked traffic for some time. I don't know what you're talking about, he says, tryin' to brazen it out like a true Limay. In Liverpool I addressed a letter to the Canadian Government which owns that lumber, I says, a registered letter, explaining that this lumber went ashore under suspicious circumstances. And what is more I'll testify in Montreal when we dock. Becuase you don't know who I am at all, I said, and appearances don't count at all, Mr. Noble. Well, by God, do you know that man didn't bother me one little bit, d' y'know all the way back? And then what did he do on reaching Montreal but leave a very important job as first mate of the Canadian Constructor, that was the flagship of the Canadian Merchant Marine and go off to Australia? It's the God's honest truth I'm not tellin' you one of these sea stories that is made out of a man's vivid imagination. That man left wife, family and all and went off to the other side of the world. He's the mate of a flagship down there too, I've heard, but it's of a fleet of fishing schooners. I just bluffed it through to save my skin because in them days there was no unions among the seamen, and I sent this Limey off to Australia for the rest of his days.